

WE CLAIM:

1. An interactive display system for use in a public space of a commercial environment, the system comprising:

a thin, self-contained display unit including a housing, the display unit characterized by a length, width and depth dimension , the display further comprising:

a video display screen;

a single board computer including a large-capacity mass data storage unit, the single board computer contained within the housing; and

a touch panel dimensioned to fit over the video display screen; and

an interactive directory system configured as an application software program and providing graphical directory information on the display system, the directory system retrieving directory content from the large-capacity mass data storage unit and displaying said directory information upon request of a user, by a user's accessing the system through the touch panel.

2. The interactive display system according to claim 1, wherein the commercial environment is a building, the directory system further comprising:

an interactive building directory section, the directory section accessible by a user's interacting with a first display system portion;

a building information section, the building information section accessible by a user's interacting with a second display system portion; and

a building concierge section, the concierge section accessible by a user's interacting with a third display system portion.

an occupant specific informational content section, informational content section appearing in the media window portion when a user selects an occupant from the occupant list; and

a map of the building indicating location of the selected occupant and directions thereto from the specific display system accessed by the user.

9. The interactive display system according to claim 8, the display system further comprising:

a network communication interface, contained within the housing, the interface configured to couple the display system to a wide area network; and

wherein, the display system accessible to an occupant through the network communication interface to thereby allow the occupant to modify the occupant specific informational content section.

10. The interactive display system according to claim 9, wherein building management establishes and updates occupant listings by communicating with the display system over the network communication interface.

11. The interactive display system according to claim 10, the building information section comprising:

building amenities location information;

building services link information;

onsite retail establishment listing; and

property management information.

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17. The interactive display system according to claim 9, the display system adapted to mount to a surface of a wall in a public area, the display components integrated into the housing, the housing protruding no more than 4.0 inches from the wall surface.

18. The interactive display system according to claim 17, the video display screen comprising a plasma display screen.

19. The interactive display system according to claim 18, the plasma display screen having a video display resolution of 848 x 480 pixels.

20. The interactive display system according to claim 19, the media window portion having a video display resolution of 640 x 480 pixels.

21. An interactive concierge system for use in a public space of a commercial environment, the system comprising:

a self-contained display unit including a housing, the display unit characterized by a length, width and depth dimension, the display further comprising:

a video display screen;

a single board computer including a large-capacity mass data storage unit, the single board computer contained within the housing; and

a touch panel dimensioned to fit over the video display screen; and

an interactive environment communication system configured as an application software program and providing videographic environmental information on the display system upon request of a user, by a user's accessing the system through the touch panel.

22. The interactive concierge system according to claim 21, wherein the video display is configured to display information at a 16:9 aspect ratio, the video display organized into a media window portion having a 12:9 aspect ratio and a control portion having a 4:9 aspect ratio, a user accessing the system by interacting with a touch-sensitive area of the control portion.

23. The interactive concierge system according to claim 22, further comprising:
a video camera, mounted to have a field of view centered about a location at which a user would position themselves when using the display system;
a microphone; and
a speaker system, the camera, microphone and speaker, in combination, providing the display system with a bi-directional videophone connection.

24. The interactive concierge system according to claim 23, further comprising:
a network communication interface, contained within the housing, the interface configured to couple the concierge system to a wide area network;
a concierge having a bi-directional videophone connection to said wide area network;
and
wherein a user establishes bi-directional communication with the concierge by interacting with a particularly designated touch-sensitive area of the control portion.

25. The interactive concierge system according to claim 24, wherein the commercial environment is a building, and wherein the concierge is physically located remote from the building.

26. The interactive concierge system according to claim 25, wherein the wide area network is the Internet.

27. A method for displaying commercial site directory and information services content to a user in a public space, the method comprising:

providing a self-contained display unit including a housing, the display unit characterized by a length, width and depth dimension, the display further including:

a video display screen;

a single board computer including a large-capacity mass data storage unit, the single board computer contained within the housing; and

a touch panel dimensioned to fit over the video display screen;

establishing a database of commercial site directory and services information on the large-capacity mass data storage unit, the database including a directory information portion and a services information portion;

accessing a selected portion of the database by interacting with a particular touch-sensitive region of the touch screen; and

displaying information contained within the selected database portion to a user.

28. The method according to claim 27, further comprising:

accessing a commercial site directory portion of the database by a first user; and
simultaneously accessing a services information portion of the database by a second
user.

29. The method according to claim 28, wherein the video display is configured to display information at a 16:9 aspect ratio, the video display organized into a media window portion having a 12:9 aspect ratio and a control portion having a 4:9 aspect ratio, the information contained within the selected database portion displayed in the media window portion.

30. The method according to claim 29, further comprising:
operating the display in a default mode when unaccessed by a user; and
wherein the default mode plays multi-media presentation material in the media
window portion.

31. The method according to claim 30, wherein the multi-media presentation material includes advertising material.

32. The method according to claim 31, wherein the control portion is located proximate the media window portion, the control portion including a plurality of user accessible touch-sensitive virtual buttons, the virtual buttons corresponding to the first, second and third display system portions.

33. The method according to claim 32, the directory information portion further comprising:

a selectable occupant list, the list appearing in the media window portion when a user selects a directory information virtual button;

an occupant specific informational content section, informational content section appearing in the media window portion when a user selects an occupant from the occupant list; and

a map of the commercial site indicating location of the selected occupant and directions thereto from the specific display system accessed by the user.

34. The method according to claim 33, further comprising:

providing a network communication interface within the housing;

coupling the display unit to a wide area network through the communication interface;

linking to the display system over the wide area network; and

establishing and updating the occupant specific informational content section by modifying an occupant's database entry over the link.

35. The method according to claim 34, wherein the wide area network is the Internet.